(d) and (e) The Government does not set up any Agri-Clinics and Agri-Business Centres on its own. However, as informed by the Ministry of Agriculture, they are promoting Agri-Clinics and Agri-Business Centres through the Central Sector Scheme 'Establishment of a network of Agri-Clinics and Agri-Business Centres' which aims at extending opportunities to all eligible agricultural graduates to support agriculture development through economically viable ventures which will be set up by them with the help of bank loan.

So far 8 Agri-Clinics and Agri-Business Centres have been set up in Kerala. However, there is no proposal for Agri-Clinics and Agri-Business Centres to establish godowns in rural areas.

Disposal of radio-active sources

1627. SHRIMATI KAMLAMANHAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to State:

(a) whether the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) is facing any problem in disposal of radio-active sources used for medical purposes in India;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what is the system of disposal of radio-active sources used by AEC in India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) has established procedures for disposal of such sources. These sources are transported in sealed flasks and disposed in tile holes designed for such waste disposal.

FDI in mining sector

1628. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government have approved about Rs. 4,000 crores of foreign direct investment in mining sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the country had been deficient in high value minerals because of low investment and lack of advanced technology required for detailed exploration;

(d) whether Government are considering to provide incentives to boost private investment and to make industry more productive and competitive; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES (DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB), in consultation with the Department of Mines, has so far approved 73 proposals of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the mining sector. The likely investment in these cases will be about Rs.4,044 crores. The approval granted by FIPB is only for foreign equity participation in a company incorporated in India. After obtaining FIPB approval these companies are required to apply to the concerned State Governments, which are the owners of minerals in their respective territorial jurisdictions for mineral concessions.

(c) Yes, Sir. The geological setting and metallogenitic history of India is similar to mineral rich Australia, South Africa and Antarctica. However, due to low investment and lack of advanced state-of-the-art technology for detailed exploration, deep-seated high value minerals like gold, diamond, base metals, etc. have not yet been fully discovered.

(d) and (e) The Government already offers a wide range of incentives to investors in India, engaged in mining activities. The entire non-atomic and non-fuel mining sector is now open for private investment including Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). A hundred per cent FDI is permitted for mineral exploration through the automatic route except diamonds and precious stones where 100% is permitted through Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB). The other incentives *inter alia* include (a) availability of tax holiday; (b) depreciation allowances on mining and quarrying equipments, environment protection equipment, pollution control equipment, energy saving equipment, etc.; (c) deduction in respect of export turnover; and (d) limited deduction of expenditure on prospecting, extraction and production of minerals from the total income.